

Future Direction—Strategic Plan

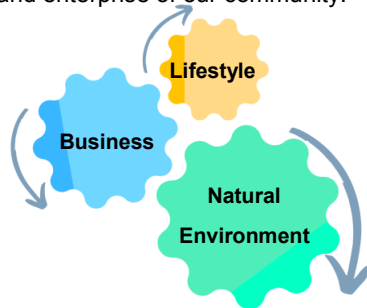
The Council's Strategic Community Plan 2020-2025 outlines the following Vision, Mission and Goals as an expression of Council's response to the aspirations of the community and to ensure our district is a great place to live, now and into the future.

Our Vision

To enhance the livability and enterprise of our community.

Our Values

Professionalism
Excellence
Service
Leadership
Resilience
Accountability
Inclusiveness



Our Themes

Our Strategic Community Plan is shaped by three themes. Our commitment to these three themes shapes our work, our values and our practices. They are Council's reply as to what it will do to combat the challenges that face the region in the foreseeable future. The themes are Lifestyle, Natural Environment and Business and are intertwined so that when all three themes are being addressed collectively will provide our community a way of life we can all be proud of.

For further information regarding these objectives please refer to Council's Strategic Plan 2020-2025 which can be viewed online at www.berribarmera.sa.gov.au

Influencing Factors

The Annual Business Plan is built initially from the recommendations of the endorsed Long Term Financial Plan, however there are other influencing factors taken into consideration, particularly with regards to the impact on rate revenue. The major influencing factors are listed below:

- Receipt of funding from the Federal Government in response to drought and the effects on the community, thus enabling Council to bring forward and carry out much required infrastructure works.
- Planning for future residential development and industrial / commercial development through the provision and need for key infrastructure to support such development and growth.
- The economic effects that the COVID-19 global pandemic has had and will continue to have on every sector of the community.
- Council's Strategic Plan and the focus it places on its future direction providing a sound basis for long term

financial management and on-going financial sustainability of the Council.

- Increasing statutory matters that absorb significant amounts of staff time. These include reporting to Council's Community Wastewater Management Services regulator, the Essential Services Commission of SA (ESCOSA). Recent changes to the Planning Development and Infrastructure Act and the Animal Management Act have impact on staff resourcing as well.
- Requirements to maintain and improve infrastructure assets to acceptable standards including roads, footpaths, kerbing/guttering, stormwater drainage, parks and gardens and recreational reserves, council properties and the like.
- Increasing regulatory standards e.g. audit committee, risk management and occupational health and safety compliance.
- Local Government Cost Index increases on relevant goods and services.
- Enterprise bargaining agreements which provide for wages and salary increases. This includes the retention and recruitment of qualified and experienced staff.
- Cost increases higher than that of the published CPI, such as electricity and water charges, insurances, waste management charges and fuel and oil costs.
- The requirement to maintain the provision of services at the high level currently provided and expected of the community – yet striving towards an operating surplus position.

Project Priorities for 2020/2021

Drought Communities Programme

- Barmera Visitor Information Centre Toilet Upgrades
- Berri & Barmera Oval Irrigation Upgrades
- Bonney Theatre Supper Room Upgrade
- Hardwaste Collection
- Lake Bonney Track Extension
- Lighting – Barmera Lakefront, Berri Riverfront, Berri CBD
- Monash Adventure Park Maze Replacement
- Reconstruct Swim Steps
- Wellbeing Events

Murray Darling Basin Economic Development Programme and Open Spaces and Places for People Programme

- Lake Bonney Nature and Cultural Tourism Project

Other

- Hayden Stoeckel Swimming Pool upgrades
- Coombe Street Master Plan activation
- Growth Strategy
- Colin Jennings Apex Park Upgrade

Rate and Service Charge

To fund the Business Plan and Budget, Council will raise operating revenue of \$16,418,301 which includes general rates of \$8,528,866.

The Valuer-General has provided Council with the property valuations for 2020/2021 whereby there has been an overall increase of 5.8% for valuations over the Council area.

Council provides a Community Wastewater Management Scheme (CWMS) to each of its townships and the full cost to maintain this service for 2020/2021 is budgeted to be \$3,273,753. These costs include capital expenditure of \$165,893 for the replacement and renewal of pumps and other equipment and for the running of the Wastewater Re-Use Scheme. The service charge for 2020/2021 is \$734.50 per occupied unit and \$700.00 for each unoccupied (vacant land) unit.

Council provides a recycling and green waste collection. This service includes –

- Weekly domestic collection in a smaller 140 litre bin for all properties
- Fortnightly recycling collection in a 240 litre bin for all properties
- Fortnightly green waste collection in a 240 litre bin for town residential properties.

The annual service charge has been set at \$228 for the three bin collection and \$193 for the two bin collection.



Rate Relief measures

Rate Capping

For 2020/2021 Council are proposing to apply a rate cap of 7% to all residential properties. This decision is in response to the crisis currently being experienced worldwide with COVID-19 and Council's awareness that there will be some members of the community who will experience difficulties meeting their rate payment obligations.

In addition, to address any potential inequities in how the rates are levied across the district, Council has decided to continue to provide relief by way of an additional rate capping. Where a ratepayer is levied an increase in general rates greater than 12% a rate cap will be applied to ensure no ratepayer will pay any more than 12% on the previous year's general rates for all property categories other than residential (which has a rate cap of 7% applied).

Rebates and Concessions

The Local Government Act requires Councils to rebate the rates payable on some land. Specific provisions are made for land used for health services, community services, religious purposes, public cemeteries and educational institutions.

Discretionary rebates may be applied by the Council under Section 166 of the Act, upon receipt of applications in accordance with Council's Rate Rebate Policy that deem to satisfy the criteria specified within the Policy.

The Berri Barmera Council will again offer additional concessions.

In response to the global pandemic and hardships particularly suffered by the commercial sector Council will apply a rate remission of 50% for quarter 1 and 25% for quarter 2 for businesses eligible for the Job Keeper payment from the Commonwealth Government and for businesses that are eligible for the Job Keeper payment but have chosen not to trade.

For those ratepayers who are on fixed incomes such as pensioners and self funded retirees, we will remit a fixed amount of \$20 per annum of the general rates, \$20 per annum of the effluent drainage charge and \$20 per annum of the waste management service charge.

The rebates and concessions are subject to the applicant meeting certain criteria. For further information please refer to the Annual Business Plan document or get in touch with Council directly.

Further information

Remission, Postponement and Deferment of Rates

The Local Government Act permits the Council, on the application of the ratepayer, to partially or wholly remit rates or to postpone rates on the basis of hardship. Where a ratepayer is suffering hardship in paying rates it is recommended to contact the Rates Officer on (08) 85821922 to discuss the matter.

The due dates for the quarterly instalments of Council rates for 2020/2021 are:

Quarter 1	1st September, 2020
Quarter 2	1st December, 2020
Quarter 3	1st March, 2021
Quarter 4	1st June, 2021

The Berri Barmera Council (Principal Office)
19 Wilson Street, BERRI SA 5343
Telephone (08) 8582 1922
Fax (08) 8582 3029

Postal Address PO Box 229, BERRI SA 5343
Email – bbc@bbc.sa.gov.au

Barmera Library Customer Service Centre
Barwell Avenue



Building a better community

This year Council have been mindful about the financial uncertainty regarding the economy as a result of COVID-19. Council has developed the 2020/2021 budget with a moderate approach and with the awareness that some residents and businesses of our district will be looking to Council for assistance during these times.

For 2020/2021 Council will have a NIL increase to the rate in the dollar for all categories of properties with additional support being given to some sectors by way of rate capping and rate remissions. You will find further detail within the Annual Business Plan on the measures Council has put in place to support our community.

Council has a 'Business and Residential Development Support Policy', which has been developed to assist new businesses to our district as well as potential new residential development by offering incentives such as short term rate rebates and reductions to planning and/or building fees.

Council has been fortunate in receiving funding under the Drought Communities Programme and Open Space and Places for People Programme. These Programmes enable Council to carry out projects that would normally be put on hold until such resources became available. This will include one of Council's most popular projects — a hard waste collection for residents and upgrades and improvement to infrastructure and amenity surrounding Lake Bonney at Barmera through the Lake Bonney Recreation, Nature and Cultural Access project.

All services and projects proposed within the 2020/2021 Annual Business Plan and Budget are aimed at stimulating the regional economy by way of employment and the engagement of local contractors, businesses and suppliers as much as practicable. Council and staff look forward to working with the community to implement the projects within the Annual Business Plan collectively working towards Building a Better Community.

Karyn Burton, Chief Executive Officer

